
OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 368

AN ACT ESTABLISHING AN ADVISORY COUNCIL ON LYME DISEASE AND OTHER TICK-BORNE DISEASES.

SUMMARY:

This bill establishes an 18-member advisory council on Lyme and other tick-borne diseases, including bartonellosis, babesiosis, anaplasmosis, and ehrlichiosis. The council's purpose is to help the Department of Public Health (DPH) commissioner develop best practices to prevent, diagnose, and treat these diseases. The council must report annually, starting by September 1, 2014, to the Public Health Committee.

The bill also requires the commissioner to report annually, starting by January 1, 2015, to the Public Health Committee on funding and expenditures related to these diseases. The report must include the amount of funding DPH received, the funding sources, and a description of DPH activities during the previous calendar year related to these diseases.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

ADVISORY COUNCIL RESPONSIBILITIES

The council must:

1. review information and guidelines on these diseases published by the International Lyme and Associated Disease Society, the Infectious Disease Society of America, the American Veterinary Medical Association, and other relevant national organizations;
2. review policies and current practices in other states relating to treating and diagnosing Lyme and other tick-borne diseases;
3. identify opportunities for coordination among state agencies and

between local, state, and federal government and private organizations to improve the dissemination of information on best practices to diagnose and treat these diseases; and

4. recommend to the DPH commissioner (a) best practices for preventing, diagnosing, and treating these diseases and (b) ways to disseminate information on these diseases through the department's website and its printed material to increase coordination among government agencies and health care providers in Connecticut.

ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

The advisory council consists of four government officials and 14 appointed members; all 18 are voting members. The government officials are (1) the agriculture, energy and environmental protection, and public health commissioners and (2) Commission on Children executive director, or their designees.

The Senate president pro tempore and House speaker each have three appointments to the council; the remaining four legislative leaders each have two. The appointed members' required qualifications are described in Table 1.

Table 1: Advisory Council Appointed Members

<i>Appointing Authority</i>	<i>Qualifications</i>
House Speaker	One physician and one ophthalmologist with at least five years of recent experience diagnosing and treating Lyme and other tick-borne diseases One representative of the Infectious Diseases Society of America
Senate Pro Tempore	One rheumatologist with at least five years of recent experience diagnosing and treating Lyme and other tick-borne diseases One researcher affiliated with a higher education institution who has conducted scientific studies on preventing, diagnosing, or treating Lyme and other tick-borne diseases One veterinarian with at least five years of recent experience treating animals with Lyme and other tick-borne diseases

Senate Majority Leader	One psychologist with at least five years of recent experience treating patients diagnosed with Lyme and other tick-borne diseases One person diagnosed with, and being treated for, Lyme or another tick-borne disease
House Majority Leader	One representative of an organization focused on treating Lyme and other tick-borne diseases One person diagnosed with, and being treated for, Lyme or another tick-borne disease
Senate Minority Leader	One pediatrician with at least five years of recent experience treating patients diagnosed with Lyme and other tick-borne diseases One researcher affiliated with a higher education institution who has conducted scientific studies on infectious disease treatment
House Minority Leader	One neurologist with at least five years of recent experience treating patients diagnosed with Lyme and other tick-borne diseases One representative of the International Lyme and Associated Disease Society

The appointing authorities must make their appointments by July 31, 2013 and fill any vacancies. Members serve three-year terms without compensation but are reimbursed for necessary expenses incurred while performing their duties.

The council must elect a member as the chairperson and he or she must schedule and hold the first meeting by September 1, 2013. The council must meet quarterly and at the call of the chair or the request of a majority of the members. A majority of the members constitutes a quorum.

BACKGROUND

Related Bill

sHB 5104 (File 320), reported favorably by the Public Health Committee, establishes an eight-member task force to study Lyme disease testing in Connecticut and other states.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Public Health Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 27 Nay 0 (04/02/2013)